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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 002350

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/18/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [IS](#) [IR](#) [EG](#) [KNNP](#) [KPAL](#)

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE WITH U/S JOSEPH ON IRAN AND POLICY ON
ISRAELI NUCLEAR PROGRAM

Classified by DCM Stuart Jones for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

Summary

¶1. (C) Arms Control and International Security U/S Robert Joseph and Arab League (AL) Secretary General Amre Moussa discussed Iran's nuclear program and the idea of a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (MEWMDZFZ) in their April 13 meeting. U/S Joseph told Moussa that the Iran nuclear weapons program is an immediate threat to regional stability that must be confronted with strong international resolve. While agreeing that a nuclear-armed Iran is not in anyone's interest, Moussa said the AL would oppose the use of sanctions and argued that the Israeli nuclear program must also be addressed. End Summary.

Arab League urges diplomatic solution on Iran

¶2. (C) U/S Joseph reviewed with AL Secretary General Amre Moussa April 13 his recent discussions with Gulf state officials on Iran, stressing that his interlocutors unanimously opposed Iran's nuclear weapons program and that the United States viewed this as an urgent strategic threat. There is a clear, widespread concern in the Gulf that Iran's course of action is destabilizing, that it would fundamentally alter the region's strategic contour, that it could motivate additional proliferation, and that Iran had not complied with its international obligations. Moussa said that Arab states were united in believing that the matter must be resolved diplomatically and cautioned that sanctions would be ineffective because of Iran's strength and its ability to retaliate by playing "major aces" in Palestine and Iraq. Moussa asked why the U.S. talks with Iran about Iraq, but will not talk with Iran about the nuclear program.

¶3. (C) U/S Joseph emphasized that time was not on the side of opponents of Iran's nuclear weapons program and said that to stop the program, international resolve, including the willingness to use sanctions and other appropriate defensive measures, must be strong. Indeed, such measures reinforce the prospects for diplomatic success. Moussa said the IAEA should be the final arbiter of a state's compliance with the NPT and added that Iran has a right to produce nuclear energy under the IAEA's supervision. Joseph responded the IAEA is not an intelligence organization and, while it can be effective in inspections, it is constrained in its ability to evaluate the nature of a given program in part because host

countries define (and limit) the IAEA's access. Consequently, Joseph underscored, Iran successfully concealed the nature of its nuclear program from the IAEA for almost two decades.

Moussa wants U.S. to pressure Israel on its nuclear program

¶4. (C) Moussa said Arab states want the U.S. to "clarify" its stance vis-a-vis Israel's nuclear program "in a credible way" and to provide "assurances" that at some point Israel will be held accountable like Iran. The AL wants the entire region to be free of weapons of mass destruction, Moussa said. For Arabs, he said, Israel constitutes "an existential threat" with the Dimona nuclear facility located only a short distance from seven Arab states. The U.S. "double standard" on Israel creates a credibility problem, Moussa added; absent discussion of Israel "we can't move on Iran." U/S Joseph repeated U.S. interest in universal accession to the NPT, but stressed that there are sound reasons why policies must be tailored to particular circumstances. The non-adherence challenges to the regime posed by India, Pakistan, and Israel are distinct from the non-compliance problems represented by North Korea or Iran. In this context, Joseph underscored Iranian ideological radicalism, expansionism, and support for terror in the region all indicate that Iran poses an "urgent threat." He added that a comprehensive peace in the Middle East is a prerequisite for dealing with the Israeli nuclear question.

¶5. (U) U/S Joseph's staff cleared this message.
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